



Home Office

Criminal casework

Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

About this guidance

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This guidance tells you about the telephone contact service provided by criminal casework to foreign national offenders (FNOs), their representatives, and the Home Office’s strategic partners.</p> <p>To improve the Home Office’s service to these groups of people, each caseworking area has a duty officer contact number. This telephone number provides a contact point for a team when the named case owner is not known, or is unavailable. It has an out-of-hours message, saying the office is closed and giving details of normal operating hours.</p> <p>For more information on the operation and administration of the duty number service, see links on left.</p> <p>Changes to this guidance – This page tells you what has changed since the previous version of this guidance.</p> <p>Contact - This page tells you who to contact for help if your senior caseworker or line manager can’t answer your question.</p> <p>Information owner – This page tells you about this version of the guidance and who owns it.</p> <p>Safeguard and promote child welfare – This page explains your duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and tells you where to find more information.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Changes to this guidance

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Service operation times and staff training

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells you when the criminal casework duty officer lines are in operation, how calls to these numbers are handled, and how staff train to manage this service.</p> <p>The duty officer lines are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.</p> <p>The local team manager appoints a suitably-trained administrative officer in the administration team to answer initial calls. These are then passed to the relevant case owner if necessary.</p> <p>All Home Office staff who handle phone calls can access the e-learning course: Handle calls with confidence and professionalism.</p> <p>Staff in criminal casework who are in regular contact with foreign national offenders (FNOs) and their representatives need to complete the e-learning course: Turn difficult callers into delighted customers.</p> <p>To access the e-learning courses, see related link: 1. Using Discover.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Informing correspondents of contact details

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If the case is allocated to a criminal casework case owner during a FNO's prison induction interview, they must be given the duty officer contact details. This must be done by the prison operations and removal team (PORT), using the FNO induction cover letter ICD.4490 available on the CID document generator.

For more details on how criminal casework allocates FNO cases to case owners, see related link: [Workflow](#).

A list of duty officer numbers is available on Horizon, see related link: [Criminal casework contact details](#).

Direct telephone numbers of individual Home Office officials must not be given to members of the public without the consent of the official concerned.

If it is necessary to give a contact number, the relevant duty officer number must be given.

Depending on your work, and in line with local line management instructions, you can include your direct line number on correspondence. For example, it may be useful to give your direct contact details in correspondence with Home Office or Prison Service staff only, that will not be seen either by the FNO or their representative.

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Out of hours messages

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Handling the initial call

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	<p>If the case owner is absent, the call must be passed to the team leader.</p> <p>If the caller's case is put through to the wrong team it must be redirected to the appropriate team who currently owns the case. The duty officer numbers for criminal casework caseworking teams are available at related link: Criminal casework contact details.</p> <p>The task of identifying the credentials of the caller and any follow-up action is the responsibility of the case owner or member of the team who is dealing with the caller's enquiry.</p> <p>Sometimes local managers have a rota of people to deal with cases belonging to absent colleagues. These details must be sent to the person designated to answer the duty officer phone.</p>	
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

General call handling and protection of information

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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Handling different types of calls

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Calls from foreign national offenders

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• listening to the person and letting them talk• considering what you can do for the caller• explaining what is causing delays, for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ an inability to verify their identity○ a late claim for asylum○ responses from their embassy, and○ if possible, give timescales for actions by criminal casework• explaining what can be done to reduce delays, for example contacting their embassy directly or producing necessary documentation• explaining why they are being detained, and explain the bail process• explaining what they need to give criminal casework to help with obtaining a travel document• giving information about the facilitated returns scheme (FRS), the FRS team hotline is 020 8760 8513. | |
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Calls from representatives of foreign national offenders

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Calls from family members of FNOs and other third parties

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Calls from press and media about FNOs

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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Dealing with abusive or persistent callers

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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

How to avoid abusive calls

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How to handle abusive calls

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- place a copy of the record sheet on the person's Home Office file, and
- make a note on CID.

Records of abusive calls are collated and forwarded to the health and safety department. Abusive calls will not be tolerated and must be followed up, where relevant, with prisons and immigration removal centres.

If a caller threatens a member of staff or a minister with violence or other physical retribution, details of the call must be recorded as described above, and the incident reported immediately to the departmental security unit's (DSU) security compliance section. DSU can be contacted using the telephone numbers below:

Restricted – do not disclose – start of section

The information in this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

Restricted – do not disclose – end of section

Threats to a detainee or offender must be referred to the relevant establishment. Threats to children must be reported to the child welfare services. For more information, see related link: [Safeguard and promote child welfare](#).

Depending on the nature of the threat, it may be appropriate to report it to the police. If there is any doubt, the duty officer must discuss this firstly with their manager, and then with DSU who will provide advice.

Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Follow-up actions after finishing a call

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff what action they must take after finishing a call to their team's duty officer telephone line.</p> <p>All calls must be recorded on the relevant person's Home Office file and CID record. This action must be completed by the person who handled the major issues of the call. For example, if a call is answered by one team member and then passed on to another to deal with, it would be the latter person who must update the relevant records, once the call is completed.</p> <p>The file minute and CID note must make clear whether any follow-up action is needed and, if so, what that action is. Where appropriate, a diary event must be set on CID. Although not applicable in all circumstances, it is best to clarify in writing to the caller what was discussed and agreed to avoid any later misunderstandings.</p> <p>It is important that if a member of criminal casework staff indicates during a call that follow-up action will take place, including if they say they will call back or put their response in writing, these actions are carried out within the timescales suggested.</p> <p>If an unforeseen delay occurs, and you cannot complete the actions within the period suggested to the caller, they must be told of this. This will help to prevent frustration on the part of the caller and unnecessary further calls asking for updates on progress.</p>	
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Dealing with complaints

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page tells criminal casework staff how to manage complaints made to them about their service.</p> <p>The Home Office is committed to providing a high quality service to both internal and external customers.</p> <p>Inevitably however, things do sometimes go wrong. When this happens the Home Office is committed to take any complaints made seriously. Every complaint is investigated thoroughly by a specially trained officer at the appropriate level of authority.</p> <p>The Home Office deals with two types of complaints, formal and operational:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• formal complaints are those made by outside organisations about the behaviour of members of staff• operational complaints refer to the way in which a person's immigration case is dealt with. <p>You must be sensitive when handling customers and corporate partners, internal and external, and make sure all relevant work procedures are followed properly. Awareness of, and reference to, the right caseworking and operational instructions is vital for all staff managing and progressing work in these areas. You must take advice from the right sources if needed.</p> <p>If the caller makes a verbal complaint during the course of a telephone call, you must follow the procedure in the criminal casework complaints process. When dealing with telephone calls you must read the relevant instructions where they exist. There is also an internal Home Office e-learning course on this topic for you to complete (available through related link: 1. Using discover), alongside reference to the Home Office-wide guidance on complaints (see related link: Complaints guidance).</p> <p>If the complainant wishes to put their complaint in writing, you must ask them to send it to</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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the following address:

Nominated responsible officer
Complaints allocation hub
Customer service unit
UK Visas & Immigration
11th floor (long corridor), Lunar House
40 Wellesley Road
Croydon
CR9 2BY

Email: complaints@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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Contact

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Service operation times and staff training</p> <p>Informing correspondents of contact details</p> <p>Out of hours messages</p> <p>Handling an initial call</p> <p>General call handling and protection of information</p> <p>Handling different types of call</p> <p>Dealing with abusive and persistent calls</p> <p>Follow up actions after finishing a call</p> <p>Dealing with complaints</p>	<p>This page explains who to contact for more help with a specific issue relating to ‘Handling telephone calls to criminal casework duty officer numbers’ guidance.</p> <p>If you have read this guidance and still need more help with this category, you must first ask your senior caseworker or line manager.</p> <p>If the question cannot be answered at that level, they or you may email criminal casework operational process and policy (CCOPP), using related link: Email CCD process team).</p> <p>Changes to this guidance can only be made by the modernised guidance team (MGT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact CCOPP, who will ask the MGT to update the guidance, if appropriate.</p> <p>The MGT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these using the link: Email: Modernised guidance team.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>See also</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers

Information owner

[About this guidance](#)

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[Informing correspondents of contact details](#)

[Out of hours messages](#)

[Handling an initial call](#)

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This page tells you about this version of the 'Handling telephone calls to duty officer numbers' guidance and who owns it.

Version	5.0
Valid from date	9 December 2013
Policy owner	Official – sensitive: information removed
Cleared by director	Official – sensitive: information removed
Director's role	Official – sensitive: information removed
Clearance date	2 November 2011
This version approved for publication by	Official – sensitive: information removed
Approver's role	Official – sensitive: information removed
Approval date	5 December 2013

Changes to this guidance can only be made by the modernised guidance team (MGT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact CCOPP, using related link: Email CCD process team, who will ask the MGT to update the guidance, if appropriate.

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Related links

See also

[Changes to this guidance](#)

[Contact](#)

Links to staff intranet removed